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THE OPERATIONS OF THE 64TH ARMORED INFANTRY
BATTALION (16TH ARMORED DIVISION) AT PILSEN,
CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 5-7 MAY 1945
(CENTRAL EUROPE CAMPAIGN)
(Personal Experience of a Machine-Gun Platoon Leader)

Type of operation described: ARMORED DIVISION
ATTACKING A DEFENDED ALLIED CITY IN
CONJUNCTION WITH A NATIONAL REVOLT

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the 64th Armored Infantry Battalion, 16th U.S. Armored Division in the attack and the ultimate liberation of the allied city of Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, 5-7 May 1945.

After the middle of April 1945 the two remaining strongholds of German resistance facing the Third U.S. Army were (a) Czechoslovakia and (b) the supposed redoubt area in southern Germany and Austria. The former was enhanced daily by German units moving eastward under 12th Army Group pressure and those units moving westward in a retreat from the Russians. This combination of forces in Czechoslovakia proved to be the last opposition for the Third Army in its move to the East.

THE GENERAL SITUATION

After clearing the German province of Thuringia, the Third U.S. Army move was shifted to the South. By the end of April 1945 it consisted of the XX, III, and XII Corps. XX Corps had the mission of capturing Salzburg, Austria, and Berchtesgaden, the suspected seat of the German Government. III Corps was to assist XX Corps on the latter's right, and XII Corps had a mission of moving down the Danube River to seize Linz, Austria. (1) On 3 May 1945 Third Army assumed command of V Corps consisting of the 1st, 2nd, 97th Infantry and 9th Armored Divisions. This Corps had been operating on the right flank of First U.S. Army, and was commanded by Maj. Gen. Clarence R. Huebner. This attachment extended the Third Army Zone northward. V Corps later received the mission of moving into Czech-

(1) A-1 Annex 2

oslovakia. (2) (See Map A) This nation had been under the German yoke since October 1938. Its nationals had fought valiantly in the British 8th Army throughout the North African Campaign and in Europe. Reputedly, the country was heavily defended by the German Army whose strength in front of our Armies was continuously increased by numbers of Germans converging from all directions.

V Corps was ordered to move on 3 May 1945 to liberate western Czechoslovakia. Details of the move included a restraining line beyond which no units of V Corps were to pass. However, vigorous reconnaissance beyond the line was permissible. (3) This line ran from Karlsbad to a point five miles East of Pilsen. It had been established by higher headquarters to facilitate the meeting with Russian units in this area. However, V Corps units were to be prepared to move farther eastward on order.

The Corps plan consisted of moving the 2nd and 97th Infantry Divisions in the general direction of Pilsen. The 9th Armored and 1st Infantry Divisions, the former to be operating on the Corps north flank, were to move eastward toward Karlsbad and Falkanov. Contact was to be maintained with VIII Corps of First U.S. Army on the North. (4) (See Map A)

On 4 May 1945 the 16th U.S. Armored Division was attached to V Corps. This Division was then located in Nurnberg in 12th Army Group reserve. Immediately the Division was ordered to move as quickly as possible to Waidhaus on the German-Czechoslovakian border. It was to be prepared to pass through any infantry units that were in its line of march to

(2) A-4, P. 417 (3) A-5, P. 325 (4) A-2, P. 450

Pilsen. Utmost speed was imperative since the liberation of Pilsen was the Division's ultimate mission. (5)

TERRAIN AND WEATHER

The terrain in the western part of Czechoslovakia was generally rolling with some mountainous areas in the northwestern edges of the country. The road-net was excellent for armored operations. There were no super-highways as were found in Germany, but the common black-top highways were found to be suitable for the use of armor. They were narrow in many places however, especially when passing through the many small towns along the routes. The two routes used during this operation into Pilsen were of this black-top variety.

Many forests in the area with defiles afforded the enemy much protection and an opportunity to obstruct the movement of armored columns.

The average town was a small farm town. There were, however, a few larger towns with populations varying from five to fifteen thousand. These towns along the route could constitute a threat to any unit that was to move through them on the way to a final objective.

A 20-30 mile corridor running along the western border, of Czechoslovakia was known as Sudetenland. Its inhabitants were both Czech and German, and it was an area that had been bitterly contested over a period of many years. Each town had two names, one German and the other Czech. Each town was predominantly populated by one or the other national group. However, both languages were spoken universally throughout the area. Such an area inhabited jointly by an ally and an enemy

(5) A-2, P. 450

must be considered enemy territory for military operations.

The rainy season had begun at the time of this operation. As a result all fields and unsurfaced roads were in an extremely muddy condition. Needless to say, such an area could present many problems in assembling and maneuvering an armored unit.

64TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION

The 64th Armored Infantry Battalion of the 16th U.S. Armored Division had been trained at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. It was organized according to Table of Organization and Equipment 7-25. (See Chart No. I)

Upon arrival in the European Theater early in 1945, the Division Commander requested that some key officers with combat experience be assigned to his Division. This request was granted by higher headquarters, and on 15 April 1945 Major George B. Pickett, Jr., arrived from an experienced armored division and assumed command of the 64th Armored Infantry Battalion in the vicinity of Mainz, Germany. Primarily due to this officer's previous experience, this Battalion later led the main effort in the Division's advance on Pilsen.

Without delay the new Battalion Commander directed that small, tank-infantry coordination and communication training be conducted in the vicinity of Mainz, Germany from 18-23 April 1945. Also, at this time, new 105mm Assault Guns mounted on M4 Tanks, part of Headquarters Company, were fired for the first time. These tanks replaced 75mm pack type howitzers mounted on light tanks. On 23 April the Battalion was at full strength in personnel and equipment. (6)

(6) Personal Knowledge

THE DIVISION SITUATION

Prior to the entry of the 16th Armored Division into Pilsen the city had been lightly bombed by the Allies. It had been hit three times on 23 April 1945 leaving approximately 10% of the reknown Skoda Plant in ruins. On two occasions bombs fell on a false wood constructed Skoda Plant a few miles West of the city. However, random destruction in the city was not apparent as no diffuculty was later encountered in vehicular movement throughout the town. (7)

The enemy situation in Pilsen proved to be solely a mass of "German Military". Intelligence reports included a total of fifteen heavy and nine light anti-aircraft batteries in the Pilsen area plus some one hundred artillery pieces throughout the city. The 413th German Administration Division controlled most of the units in the western edges of Czechoslovakia. Under its control were a 31st Infantry Regiment and elements of the 2nd Panzer Division. In addition many scattered "Kampf" (8) Groups were reported making an estimated total of some ten thousand enemy troops in Pilsen or on its outer defenses. (See Map A) (9)

The Division was ordered to move early on 5 May to the vicinity of Waidhaus, Germany. This move was organized in one column and followed Route 14. Twelve miles per hour was the speed of each march unit with twenty miles per hour set as the maximum speed for any overtaking vehicle. Combat Command B led this move and was organized into three task forces with the 396th Armored Field Artillery Battalion in direct support of the Combat Command. (10) Coordination had been attempted with

(7) Personal Knowledge (8) Literally "battle" (9) Statement by Lt. Col. George B. Pickett, then Battalion Commander 22 January 1949. (10) Personal Knowledge

the 97th U.S. Infantry Division through which the Division was to pass. This division had been successful in moving as far as Stribro against slight opposition. Actual pass through was not to be effected until 6 May during the final phase of the armored attack into Pilsen itself. Phase lines were effectively used as a means of reporting march progress. The division closed into Waidhaus at 1500 on 5 May and the Command Post opened in an old railroad car in the town.

7415 Tactical elements of Combat Command B had moved into Rosshaupt, Czechoslovakia. Combat Command B then directed that a minor rearrangement of units be effected that night to facilitate the attack to take place the next morning. The 64th Armored Infantry Battalion (reinforced) moved from Rosshaupt at 052030 May and closed into a new assembly area at Bor, Czechoslovakia at 052115 May. (11)

During this change of locations the reinforced tank battalion of Combat Command B selected a large field as its bivouac without a thorough inspection of the site. The battalion moved into the area and immediately every tank bogged down. As a result much time was lost in assisting this battalion out of its predicament. Fortunately all vehicles of the 64th Armored Infantry Battalion had moved into an area of hard standing and no difficulty was encountered.

At 2130 the Battalion Commander returned from his reconnaissance and issued an oral order to his assembled commanders and staff. (12)

THE ATTACK

The 16th Armored Division attack order directed Combat Command A to advance down Highway 97 to Pilsen, and (11) A-3, P. 3 (12) Personal Knowledge

Combat Command B to pass through the forward elements of the 97th Infantry Division and advance down Highway 14 into Pilsen. Both Combat Commanders were to begin the advance from their present positions at 060600 May 1945. Check points and phase lines were designated to coordinate the advance.

Combat Command B was organized for combat as follows for this operation:

TASK FORCE A (PICKETT)

Troop B, 23rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron
1 Platoon, Company D, 16th Tank Battalion
64th Armored Infantry Battalion (minus Company B)
Company A, 16th Tank Battalion
2 Platoons, Company B, 216th Armored Engineer
Battalion (minus 1 Squad)

TASK FORCE B (LEWIS)

16th Tank Battalion (minus 1 Platoon, Company D
and Company A)
Company B, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion
1 Squad, Company B, 216th Armored Engineer Bat-
talion

COMBAT COMMAND B CONTROL

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Combat
Command B
Company B, 216th Armored Engineer Battalion
(minus)

DIRECT SUPPORT

396th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

The commanding officer of Combat Command B directed that his command begin the advance down Highway 14 at 060600

May. The order of march for Combat Command B was as follows:

Task Force "A"

396th Armored Field Artillery Battalion

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Combat
Command B

Task Force "B"

"B" (Field) Trains of all Combat Command B Units

The commanding officer of the 64th Armored Infantry Battalion was commander of Task Force A. The Battalion was organized into reinforced companies and arranged into the exploiting column as follows:

SCREENING FORCE

Troop B, 23rd Cavalry Squadron (with 1 Platoon
Company D, 16th Tank Battalion attached)

ADVANCE GUARD

Reconnaissance Platoon, 64th Armored Infantry
Battalion

1 Platoon, Co. A, 16th Tank Battalion

1 Platoon, Co. A, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

1 Squad, Co. B, 216th Armored Engineer Battalion

MAIN BODY

Company A, 16th Tank Battalion (minus)

Company A, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion (minus)

2 Platoons, Co. B, 216th Armored Engineer Battalion

Forward Command Post, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

Headquarters Company, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

in the order:

Assault Gun Platoon

Machine-Gun Platoon

Mortar Platoon

Company C, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

Medical Detachment, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

"A" (Combat) Trains, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

(13)

The cavalry reconnaissance troop (reinforced) was to start its reconnaissance at 060430 May. If heavy opposition was encountered it was to pull to the flanks. The tank platoon of the screening force was directed to join Company C, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion when the main elements of the Task Force passed through the screen. Every effort would be made to gain a foothold in the built-up area, if resistance was met near the city. Then Company C would continue the attack through the leading team.

The advance guard was directed to follow the screen by forty-five minutes. The main body was ordered to follow the advance guard by three hundred yards with one hundred yards between companies. Water, gas, and oil were to be issued at 060330 May. Radio nets were to open at 060500 May. (14)

Troop B, 23rd Cavalry Squadron (reinforced) began its move at 060430 May and the main body followed as planned. Pass through of the 97th Infantry Division was accomplished at Stribro which was the line of departure for the entire force. The effect of the obvious intent of the enemy to capitulate was felt almost immediately, when numbers of Germans merely laid down their arms on the approach of the armored column and began their trek to the rear along the route. (15) (See Map B)

(13) A-3, P. 3 (14) Statement By Lt. Col. George B. Pickett, then Battalion Commander, 22 January 1949 (15) Personal Knowledge

First notable opposition was met by the forward elements at the town of Kozolupy, Czechoslovakia, where two German 88's supported by small arms fire, opposed the approach of armor. This resistance was easily overcome since the 88's had been emplaced for anti-aircraft protection and did not cover the ground approaches out of Kozolupy. White phosphorous fired from the light tanks eliminated the sniping fire from the buildings.

A smaller force (Casper), composed of one platoon, Company A, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion, and one platoon of Company A, 16th Tank Battalion, had been dispatched to enter Pilsen from the southwest. This unit captured three hundred and fifty men at Stod. Later they overcame a roadblock at Chotesov and began their entry into the outskirts of Pilsen. (16) The main body of Combat Command B had been successful in reaching the outer limits of the city but the column had been temporarily cut at Kozolupy by a platoon of German tanks which moved across Highway 14. These tanks with their accompanying Infantry entered Kozolupy immediately after 396th Field Armored Artillery Battalion cleared and before Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Combat Command B, which had been delayed, arrived. (17) (See Map B)

Hundreds of Czech citizens, awakened to the proximity of their liberators, were beginning a mass exodus from the city. This tended to slow the advance of the column. A large bomb crater astride the highway also proved a minor barrier.

The initial entry into the city was warmly welcomed by the Czechs. An enthusiastic reception was extended by them (16) A-3, P. 4 (17) Personal Knowledge

in the form of cheering, throwing flowers, and the offering of food and drink. The American arrival was anticipated, and many signs announcing the Liberator were hung on the buildings.

This greeting was short lived. It was interrupted immediately by a radio warning from the Battalion Commander of the enemy capabilities. Suddenly small arms and automatic weapons fire opened down the length of the column. The Battalion Commander's warning, as later verified, was heard only by two stations, Headquarters Company and the Reconnaissance Troop. The latter had passed through and had returned to the city proper. The bulk of fire came from a barracks and a church spire adjacent to Headquarters Company. All units of Headquarters Company returned the fire while remaining mounted in their half-tracks. The Machine-Gun Platoon had one Machine-Gun over Table of Equipment allowances mounted on each of its vehicles; and thereby was able to deliver a large volume of fire.

(18) (See Map C)

A city square two blocks long on each side with a large Cathedral as its dominant feature proved to be the next point of interest. The City Hall was situated on the North side of this square. Headquarters Company, with its increased automatic fire potential, was directed to deploy in and around the square. This movement was taken under increased enemy sniper fire, but was short-lived as most snipers were shortly killed.

(19) (See Map C)

During the same period Task Force "CASPER" had succeeded in capturing the Pilsen Airport. A total of six hundred

(18) Personal Knowledge (19) Personal Knowledge

prisoners, seventy German planes, plus the liberation of two U.S. Air Force Officers, were the results of this action. (20)

The Czech underground began to make their presence known to many units in and around the city square. Their appearance in outdated uniforms and all types of armament was a credit to their nationalism which was indicative of their intent to assist in their own liberation. This help might have been more profitably utilized had it been known in some detail by the smaller units prior to the entry. It was later revealed that the Czech attempt to revolt against their conqueror had gotten a start the previous night, 5 May. The underground, with some assistance, had gained control of the radio station. Germans and known sympathizers were literally beaten to death on the streets. Leads as to the origin of fire helped greatly in gaining control of the city. Patrols with Czech guides were established and routed to all suspected parts of the town. (21)

The town square was secured by 060830 May, at which time the Task Force Command Post was established in the City Hall. At 060900 May sections of the town were assigned to each of the companies for general clean-up operations. Company A, 16th Tank Battalion and Company A, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion, (minus), were given the mission of blocking the entrances into Pilsen from the East. Remnants of a small German S.S. unit moved against one block commanded by Lieutenant Schlossberg and after a brief fire-fight surrendered. The Skoda Works was taken during this period by elements of Com-

(20) A-3, P. 4 (21) Personal Knowledge

pany C, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion, led by the Executive Officer of the Battalion. A battery of 88mm guns and a small S.S. unit were captured in the surrounding yards with little difficulty. (22) (See Map C)

At 061030 May, sporadic fire again broke out in the town square. The large Cathedral tower housed several snipers who appeared to have signalled the fire. They were eventually killed and shortly thereafter a memorable picture was portrayed when a Czech and U.S. Flag were displayed from the spire. (23) (See Map C) By this time, various and sundry reports were reaching all elements of the Combat Command as to the German locations still to be overcome. Primary among these was the stated threat of the enemy, located eastward, which supported the possibilities of a counterattack into the city from that direction. The outer defense of the city was then increased to include road blocks on the north and northeast edges of the town as such positions had already been posted to the East. (24) (See Map C)

Reports from Prague over the local radio station told of a simular National revolt attempt against the Conqueror. This uprising had not been quite as successful, however, and the German was still maintaining the upper hand with the loss of many Czech lives. Based on this knowledge and since the exact time of Prague's liberation by the Allied Forces was still questionable, the consideration of a move to that city by the 16th Armored Division could not be discounted. (25)

This likelihood prompted an order at 061330 May sending a force composed of the Reconnaissance Platoons of the 64th (22) Personal Knowledge (23) Eye-witness (24) Personal Knowledge (25) Personal Knowledge

Armored Infantry and 16th Tank Battalions to reconnoiter the road net to Pribam and to report its condition and the enemy reactions. These platoons were to return to Pilsen prior to darkness. This mission was changed almost immediately when a new order was issued directing the force to contact a German General in the vicinity of Spelene Porici desirous of surrendering his Command. After the units' departure and prior to reaching their destination, the surrender was accepted by advanced elements of another division. When this was determined, the force moved northward where civilians reported small towns still in German hands. They proceeded to Woltusch where they were confronted by a large German mechanized column moving in their direction. Remembering that their mission did not include a fight, they withdrew to Hvozdan. En route they were met at a road junction by the same enemy unit that had utilized a more direct route to the West. All weapons of the reconnaissance force were directed at the column when the German Commander stepped forward to surrender his command. In the custody of two men this group was returned to Pilsen. (26) (See Map B)

The force then proceeded to Pribam where two Russian Paratroopers, mission unknown, were met. After an exchange of greetings the Reconnaissance Platoons returned to Pilsen.

Meanwhile in Pilsen, the German Commandant, Major General V. Majewsky was captured. He was immediately brought to the Command Post at the City Hall where he surrendered the city to the Division, then casually withdrew a U.S. "45" pistol from an American shoulder holster and shot himself through the

(26) A-3, P. 5 - 6

head. His assistant, Brigadier General Mueller, also captured at this time stated that orders had been received to defend the city at all costs. The Commander had later changed this however and supposedly had instructed his command not to fire at Americans but to continue to resist Czech mobs. This information proved to be questionable since all snipers killed wore German uniforms. Also the S.S. formations did not abide by his orders but made an effort to destroy the Skoda Works and other installations. The remainder of 6 May passed without notable occurrences. (27)

At 060800 May instructions were issued to disarm all Czechs excepting police and military personnel. This was accomplished by patrols moving throughout the city. The Machine-Gun Platoon was directed to prevent the movement of Czechs toward Prague. This difficult assignment was successfully carried out by overwatching the town square, where most of the Czechs assembled. Unnecessary vehicular movement of all kinds leaving the city was blocked. (28) This naturally caused some resentment among the Czechs, who were shortly appeased when word was received of Prague's liberation by the Russians. The Division then settled down to a status of "alert". Task Force "A" had captured over 4700 prisoners of war since 060530 May. No accurate estimate of enemy killed can be made due to the large number of Germans who were eliminated by the Czechs for personal grievances before the Task Force could get control of isolated enemy groups.

On 8 May 1945 the 64th Armored Infantry Battalion

(27) Statement by Lt. Col. George B. Pickett, then Battalion Commander, 22 January 1949 (28) Personal Knowledge

received official notification that the war in Europe had ended.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

An armored division was used in the liberation of Pilsen, a large city with a population of 140,000 people, solely to continue the heavy pressure against the enemy as they retreated during the closing phases of the war in Europe. Germany was a stunned and defeated nation anxiously attempting to defend from any possible position as its army retreated eastward. The quick move of some twenty miles to Pilsen from the Czech border was accomplished in a matter of less than two hours. This rapid movement certainly did not permit the enemy to organize any successive delaying positions.

Then too, the German forces that faced the Division were not organized, on a fighting unit basis, to delay the movement of any force. All forms of opposition were overcome in one-half day in the complete operation against the city by two Combat Commands of an Armored Division. Only remnants of German units remained with their meager effort directed to fighting their enemy deep in their rear. This was evidenced when an administrative division's presence was the largest major headquarters encountered. Considering the enemy situation as a whole; it was their fight to the finish, not too desirous of giving up, but leaving them no alternative as they just did not have the means to conduct a defense or offense.

The Czechs' desire to fight for their own liberation was a commendable spirit. Their opposition could begin only when Allied help was in sight. Their means were also limited in that a nation occupied for some seven years has little left in the way of military value with which to confront their

occupier. Their sincerity could not be over-looked, at that time, when every conceivable effort, to include such arms as shot-guns, was utilized to resist one nation and to assist another. Their effort had been efficiently planned by the Czech Underground. When they were assisted in gaining the upper hand, their carrying out of a conclusive clean-up of enemy nationals-both civilian and military-plus collaborators, was conducted in a minimum length of time. Their endeavor was overdone somewhat when some civilians were checked, liberated, and finally apprehended a second time. Most of the suspects, however, rarely reached a screening area. The Underground succeeded in securing, with a little support, the radio station along with all communication systems, the rail centers and the jails.

The existence of such an operational group within Czechoslovakia must have been known in Allied Intelligence channels. If such information, with available details, had been disseminated in a manner to include the smaller units prior to the operation much time and effort could have been saved. Contact might easily have been established at several levels of command, thereby relieving much of the confusion that did prevail. Certainly control of the civilians within the city would have been maintained thereby eliminating problems of jubilant mobs that did obstruct effective fire on many instances.

The problem of a joyful populace and its effect on the American soldiers must be thoroughly considered. During a tactical situation, when conditions exist such as those encountered in the move into Pilsen, one can easily forget the existing dangers involved. Every effort must be directed toward keeping the situation at hand and the enemy capabilities

utmost in the minds of all concerned. Such a mass reception participated in by troops might easily be the prelude to a disaster.

The speed with which an armored division moves over an area does not indicate that that particular area is then in friendly hands. During the move into Pilsen the main column of the Combat Command was temporarily intersected by an enemy tank force. This interruption slowed the supporting artillery and might have stopped the remainder of the support if it had been of greater strength. A gap had been created in the column, the prevention of which is an armored unit responsibility.

Flank security for such a rapid spearhead cannot be considered effective in that it advances as rapidly as the main elements and serves only as a warning when enemy nearness is observed. A flank security force is not of great enough strength to combat opposition since it rarely consists of more than one platoon. Such security is often sacrificed to make a stronger thrust into enemy territory, giving more stress to the principle of mutual support within the main column and between columns. This fundamental was employed by the Division with two Combat Commands entering the city of Pilsen on two main avenues of approach; one, in turn, later dispatched a smaller force to the flank near the city, to enter on a third route.

Lastly, a definite plan of operation within the city had not been formulated prior to entry into the city. The commanders of Combat Command B and Task Force "A" had no information concerning the city of Pilsen except the location of the anti-aircraft defenses. No town plan was available. The only

plan for the operation within the city consisted of the instructions from Task Force "A" Commander that if the leading team (Companies A, 16th Tank Battalion and 64th Armored Infantry Battalion, minus) met resistance at the outskirts of town, they would immediately attack to gain a foothold in the built-up area. It was further announced that once this foothold was gained, Company C, 64th Armored Infantry Battalion, with the light tanks and assault guns attached, would be committed either on the right or left of the lead team to continue the attack. At best, such a plan was sketchy and incomplete. However, the lack of detailed information and town plans prohibited planning for operations within the city. Only after a town plan was taken from the wall of the Mayor's office in Pilsen by the Task Force Commander did the Task Force have accurate information of the town of Pilsen. (29) It is also interesting to note that the Combat Command staff was fully aware of the presence of the world famous Pilsner Beer Plant but completely ignorant of the location of the much greater military target, the Skoda Arms Works.

LESSONS

Lessons emphasized during this operation are:

1. The Armored Infantry Battalion is a mobile, powerful, and lightly armored unit that is tactically and administratively self-contained. Reinforced by tanks and armored engineers it forms a task force that is highly flexible and capable of independent action.

✓ 2. Phase lines are effectively used by armored units in reporting progress during a rapid advance.

3. Gaps must be avoided in an armored column. An

(29) Statement by Lt. Col. George B. Pickett, then Battalion Commander, 22 January 1949

enemy interruption of the column can delay the move and prevent the accomplishment of mutual support that is so vital to armor during an attack.

4. Radio is the primary means of communication within an armored division. FM radio has major limitations when used within a large city.

5. Small pockets of opposition must be by-passed by armored infantry units on exploitation or seizure missions.

✓ 6. Combat experience of key officers is beneficial to inexperienced armored units where quick decisions based on past experience are frequently made in fast-moving situations.

7. Initiative on the part of small unit commanders when operating separately from parent units contributes to the speedy success in exploitation.

8. Careful consideration must be given to likely assembly areas for track vehicles before they are moved off the roads. Bogging down is a serious threat in such instances.